
The Future

The Naval Ocean Systems Center has a clear tradition of excellence, and the present situation in the world will demand that we strengthen that tradition. We can all take some measure of hope in what we see happening in the world today, as the Cold War ends and the bankrupt ideology that supported that war begins to collapse on itself. We now live in a world with a greatly reduced threat of nuclear holocaust, a world that promises some of the blessings we already enjoy to millions of others who have never known these blessings.

We, who work at DoD laboratories like NOSC and who develop much of the technology that makes our own nation great, can take pride in what we have accomplished. The Soviet Union, after decades of spending too much of its energies, its resources, and its people on massive military development, has recognized that it cannot compete with us in both the military and economic arenas. The military systems we develop are the products of a culture combining free enterprise and democracy, and that combination is without equal. Our military systems have provided us the security necessary to allow our economic and political systems to mature and shine. As we look back on the history that led to NOSC's

50-year milestone, we see impressive contributions to the military strength of our nation, contributions that helped bring about the very changes we see in the world today.

The technology development that has been our reason for existence, not only supported the nation's military might, but its economic and industrial strength as well. Science and technology know no boundary between military and civilian enterprise, and we at NOSC have contributed our share, as evidenced clearly by the more than 400 patent applications we have filed in the past 10 years.

Our first 50 years began with the challenge of World War II and have ended with the end of the Cold War; we can truly say we helped the Navy and the nation meet that challenge. Our second 50 years begin with a challenge of equal magnitude: the despair and virtual slavery in Eastern Europe have been replaced by hope and promise of freedom, but the relative stability of a bi-polar world dominated by two superpowers has been replaced with a good deal of uncertainty and instability.

We live in a world in which superpower influence has diminished, a world in which a number of countries that previously looked to either the U.S. or the U.S.S.R.

for leadership now boast strong military, political, and economic systems of their own. And, in many of the smaller countries, the destabilizing influence of the end of the Cold War has increased the possibility of violent regional conflict, based as much on economic and religious factors as political ones.

In this new world, the role of research and development will be greater than ever. It is the basis for our military strength, and the most fundamental element of our economic strength. If that challenge were not great enough by itself, we face it at a time when the public and the Congress are clamoring for a peace dividend and seeking it through a substantial decrease in the defense budget. The result will be a draw-down in the size of the defense industry and a shift away from the tech base and systems development within the private section so essential to our country's military strength.

From an economic and military standpoint, the efforts of the DoD research laboratories, particularly in the high technology area, thus become significantly more important. As the potential returns to the defense industry from basic research and development appear to be dwindling, fewer and fewer contractors will be risking capital investment on military programs, and there will be increasing requirements for laboratories like NOSC to make up the shortfall. To support a modern Navy and

an island nation in an uncertain world, the need for science and technology, the need for scientists and engineers, will be greater than ever.

Throughout our five decades of service to the Navy, this laboratory has pursued excellence in a variety of technical fields. We must not only continue that pursuit; we must intensify it. While we can expect to see changes in the way we do business, as the world forces us to change, our role will remain strong. We face a future every bit as exciting and challenging as our past. As the employees of this laboratory met the challenges of World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Cold War, we must look ahead to meet the challenges of the new century so rapidly approaching. The work that we do here in our major mission areas is of essential importance to the United States Navy, and we must pursue it with the same enthusiasm and dedication we've shown for the past 50 years.



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